

Nikolaj Recke and Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen

Stalke Galleri
Vesterbrogade 14A

25.8.to 23.9.2000

Stalke Galleri opened its doors for the reception of an exhibition by Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen and Nikolaj Recke on Friday, August 25, from 4 to 8 pm.

Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen presented her video *Edita, Aida & Terista*. The work was a realistic depiction of everyday events, seen through a documentary-like portrayal of three Filipino women on a shopping spree in Copenhagen. In contrast to a traditional documentary, the artist did not hide her presence behind the camera. This became evident through an integrated understanding of the women's enthusiasm and humor conveyed by the artist.

The second work by Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen was an installation—an oasis in which the feminine universe was extended. It was conceived as a dream world, a breathing space distinct from everyday life, created on the basis of her *Lili-Stories*. Within this dream world, the spectator could lean back comfortably on amorphous cloud-like sculptures and observe the surroundings, where large drawings and the video *Little Brown Sack* expanded this playful and fantastical universe.

Nikolaj Recke showed minimalistic photographs of empty gallery spaces. Upon closer inspection, these black-and-white photographs revealed themselves as compositions of two spaces—spaces well known to art connoisseurs as the art establishment's significance-laden "white cubes." The photographs evoked a range of associations connected to the spectator's own experiences of such spaces. At the same time, they concretely created a new space in which the artist had left a way out—both metaphorically and literally—within the field of vision.

The emptiness of the spaces raised the question of whether it was the art establishment's framing of the experience of a work of art that defined the artist's profile, or whether, conversely, it was the artworks within the exhibition space that defined the gallery's profile.

The theme of empty space reappeared in an installation by Nikolaj Recke consisting of a ring on the floor, created by the artist walking the same circular path endlessly, with footprints delineating the circle. The work seemed to invite the spectator to follow the same path. By doing so, the ring offered a clear sensation of the mental state of speculation and reflection that had generated it, further intensifying the sense of a reflective space.

Reflection on spatiality was also a key element in Nikolaj Recke's final work, which was created using primitive, homemade electric light bulbs that only faintly illuminated the space. The light source was constructed from simple, everyday materials—household jars of varying shapes and sizes.

Nikolaj Recke's establishment of the basic premises for an "individual universe" paralleled the way a universe for contemplation was formed. On the one hand, it stemmed from his newly created spaces and his circular "universe of thought." On the other hand, it emerged from Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen's world of familiar integrity and imaginative *Lili-Stories*. Within this contemplative universe, fantasies, reflections, and brooding were given room to unfold.

Tine Bundgaard, Copenhagen, August 14, 2000



Nikolaj Recke in his circular floor installation at Galleri Stalke, 2000
— part of the joint exhibition with Lilbeth Cuenca Rasmussen.

In connection with the exhibition by Lilbeth Cuenca Rasmussen and Nikolaj Recke at Stalke Galleri, Information published a review by Rune Gade, who describes the exhibition as a meeting between two distinct yet complementary artistic positions.

According to Gade, Lilbeth Cuenca Rasmussen works with a form of personal and culturally grounded documentary practice. Through video, drawing, and installation, her works address questions of identity, family structures, and social relations. They often take their point of departure in everyday situations, which are elevated to a broader level through the artist's visible presence and engagement. Gade emphasizes how Cuenca Rasmussen's practice bridges the intimate and the societal, offering insight into cultural encounters and shifts.

Nikolaj Recke's contribution is described as more system-oriented and spatial in nature. His works revolve around repetition, circular movement, and institutional frameworks, often expressed through a restrained, minimalist aesthetic. As Gade notes, Recke investigates how meaning emerges through action, time, and space, and how the artist's presence can be registered through traces rather than explicit statements.

Gade points out that the exhibition does not present itself as a fully unified collaborative project, but rather as a juxtaposition of two independent artistic practices. It is precisely this difference, however, that generates tension and vitality within the exhibition. The viewer is confronted with both the personally narrative and the conceptually investigative, opening a space for reflection on contemporary artistic strategies and on the relationship between subjective experience and structural inquiry.



Installation views from the 2000 exhibition at Galleri Stalke featuring works by Nikolaj Recke and Lilbeth Cuenca Rasmussen.